



Mended Hearts™  
of Huntsville



# *The Beat Goes On*

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P. O. Box 18912, Huntsville, AL 35804-8912

August 2020  
Dr. Fredonia B. Williams, Editor

## *F*rom the president...

As I take a break from our Mended Hearts virtual annual meeting, I realize the sound of school buses is silent in our neighborhood. COVID-19 continues to infect our country and disrupt our way of life. The questions I am hearing are, when are we going to be able to have monthly meetings with guest speakers again, and when can we start to do visiting of patients and train new visitors? It appears the hospital volunteer program will not restart until this pandemic improves and/or if there is a vaccine available, and the best guess for that is probably early next year according to medical experts.

So, the best we can do in our group is to stay safe and healthy, as almost all of us are in one of those higher risk categories. You should contact your health care provider, and arrange to get a flu shot soon, as that will be among the first lines of defense for heart patients and their families. It will also be required for all visitors once we start up again.



We had our first virtual Mended Hearts 260 support group meeting on Wednesday, August 12<sup>th</sup>. Our speaker was Dr. Allan Rollins, a subspecialty fellow in his final year of training within advanced heart failure and transplant cardiology at Vanderbilt. Members who joined us by Zoom received very important information on ***Cardiovascular Care in the COVID Era***.

Dr. Allman confirmed what we already knew that the populations most at risk of Covid are individuals in the older category, those with comorbidities (several diagnosis) such as coronary artery disease, obesity and heart failure. Two of the cardiovascular casualties of Covid are that heart patients have a lower likelihood of reporting symptoms and going to the hospital. One of the main barriers of care is the patient's fear of acquiring Covid if they go to the hospital.

Dr. Allman pointed out 3 contributing factors to our health during this time.

- High sodium diet as individuals rely on carryout and delivery foods
- Lack of access to gyms leads to a sedentary lifestyle
- Social isolation

He encouraged members to take advantage of some of the solutions and interventions in seeing our health professionals such as telemedicine.

**MH 260 would like to thank Dr. Rollins and Dr. Menachem, who was also on the call and is also with Vanderbilt University Medical Center.**

***Dr. Fredonia B. Williams, Chapter 260 Interim President***

## Mask update: Don't let your guard down!



Wearing a homemade mask is not perfect protection, but researchers say it is probably better than nothing. Be sure mask-wearing does not give false confidence about protection. Social distancing and regular hand washing are still essential.

A proper mask fit should have a bendable edge at the top that can be pinched tightly to the upper nose. It should fit closely to the mouth, and snugly under the chin. Wear at all times in public. A scarf tied loosely around the nose provides no protection to the wearer or the public.

Don't reuse masks before disinfecting. Masks that become wet during use must not be casually left around the home or in public places. Do not drop masks as litter in public spaces. If the mask is not removed properly, it becomes another virus transmission route. Remove mask by the straps only, place in a pillowcase, then wash in a machine using hot water. Dry on high heat.

No one has yet studied the effectiveness of masks in a clinical setting during the coronavirus pandemic, but studies prior to the pandemic suggest cloth masks are less effective than surgical masks. Most studies concluded that cloth masks should only be used as a last resort, but they are better than nothing.



## Covid-19 remains a concern for heart patients

If you have heart disease or high blood pressure, be sure to keep taking your medicine during the coronavirus crisis. According to the Harvard Heart Letter, doctors know that Covid-19 is especially dangerous for older people with heart disease and high blood pressure. What they don't know is why. It could be older people are just more vulnerable, or maybe the cardiovascular disease itself is to blame.

High blood pressure seems to double the risk for bad outcomes in people with Covid-19. Researchers have been trying to find out why. One thing is known: Two classes of blood pressure drugs have something in common with Covid. They both use the same pathways to enter the heart and lungs. The question has been whether ACE inhibitors and angiotensin-receptor blockers (ARBs) help or harm people infected with the virus.

Three studies have found no evidence of harm for people infected with Covid-19 who take these drugs, according to the Harvard Health Letter. The studies are informative but not considered conclusive because they weren't placebo-controlled research.

Doctors recommend people already using the drugs should keep taking them. Another crucial concern is that heart patients continue taking low-dose aspirin. In people who died of Covid-19, doctors have found clots in small vessels and capillaries of the heart. These small clots can cause heart attacks and low-dose aspirin helps to prevent the clots.

Covid-19 is suspected to directly damage the heart muscle, causing cardiomyopathy, a form of heart failure. Even Covid patients without heart disease can experience this.

For anyone experiencing symptoms of a heart attack, the most important thing is to call 911 immediately. The hospital is the safest place you can be if you are having a heart attack. There was a dramatic drop in people coming to emergency rooms with heart attack symptoms during March. The usual number fell by 40 percent. Some have speculated that this was because of fear of being infected with Covid at the hospital.

## Craving hugs? *There is a genetic reason*



People doing social distancing might suddenly feel a sort of skin hunger, a craving for human touch, the sort of thing that comes from a simple hug.

According to research published in *Communication Monograph*, the craving for touch involves both heredity and a psychological need for physical human interaction.

Part of the need for touch may come from infancy. An infant needs touch to survive and this need for touch never goes away, says researcher Kory Floyd of the University of Arizona.

Skin hunger might reveal itself as a need for a hug, a need for a back scratch or rub, or a kiss on the cheek. **No help from technology.** Technology has done many things, but offering touch is one thing it can't do -- or at least hasn't done yet.

Skin hunger is a signal that we need people and touch in our lives, Floyd said. Floyd said the need for affection is different between men and women. About 45 percent of a woman's need for affection is driven by hereditary factors and 55 percent from environment, such as personal experiences. Men seem to be solely dependent on their environment.

### So what can you do in quarantine?

Use your memory. Think of a time in your life when you felt happy and connected to others. Try to imagine the scene, the colors, and the smells. Think of the people there and how you interacted. Use photos to help.

Try an old movie for enjoyment and memories

Try a bath, with an aromatic oil.

Try arranging a properly social distance outdoor party with friends, with everyone talking from their own car.

## Fight Stress with Healthy Habits

**Slow down**—Plan ahead and allow enough time to get the most important things done without having to rush.

**Snooze more**—Try to get six to eight hours of sleep each night. To fight insomnia, add mindfulness and activity.

**Let worry go**—The world won't end if a few things fall off of your plate. Give yourself a break and just breathe.

**Laugh it up**—Laughter makes us feel good. Don't be afraid to laugh out loud, even when you're alone.

**Get connected**—A daily dose of friendship in great medicine. Make time to call friends and family so you can catch up.

**Get organized**—Use "to do" lists to help you focus on your most important tasks, and take big projects one step at a time.

**Practice giving back**—Volunteer your time or spend time helping out a friend. Helping others helps you.

**Be active every day**—Exercise can relieve mental and physical tension. Find something you think is fun and stick with it.

**Give up bad habits**—Too much tobacco, or caffeine can increase blood pressure. Cut back or quit to decrease anxiety.

**Lean into things you can change**—Make time to learn a new skill, work towards a goal, or to love and help others.

## The Beat Goes On—Huntsville AL Mended Hearts Chapter 260

# Recognition

We recognize member birthdays and surgery dates referred to as Mendiversaries. Congratulations to everyone who is celebrating a heart procedure anniversary this month.

If we have your month listed incorrectly or you would prefer not to be listed, please notify the chapter president. If we are missing your celebration, let me know at 256.837.7354.



### August Birthdays

Betty Johnson  
Donald Elyea  
Eric Lundquist

### August Mendiversaries

Sherrill Altice  
Randy Boyette  
James Carter  
Chris Green  
Kath McFarland  
Maureen Nix  
Melissa Roebuck  
Carol Theriot

### Mended Hearts Prayer

We ask for your blessings, Lord.  
We ask for strength that we may pass it on to others.  
We ask for faith that we may give hope to others.  
We ask for health that we may encourage others.  
We ask, Lord, for wisdom that we may use all your gifts well.  
Amen



Beth Magie  
Bonnie Morris  
Tom Smith  
Donnette Smith  
Shelley Wyckoff

### Confusing Signs

1. Toilet out of Order. Please use the floor below
2. In a laundromat: Automatic washing Machines. Please remove all your clothes when the light goes out.
3. In a London department store: Bargain Basement upstairs.
4. In an office: After the tea break, staff should empty the teapot and stand upside down on the draining board.
5. Notice in health food shop window: Closed due to illness
6. On repair shop door: We can repair anything. (Please knock hard on the door – The bell doesn't work.)

### Thought for the Month



*Coronavirus has turned us into pets like our dogs –  
We roam the house looking for food.  
We're told "No" if we get too close to strangers.  
And, we get really excited about car rides and walks.*



## Is It Time to Renew Your Mended Hearts Membership or join us???

### (both national and Chapter 260)

Membership in Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts now is about how you can help improve the lives of heart patients and their families, beginning with your own. We are now offering a free membership level. This was created so that money will not be a barrier to engaging with Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts and receiving access to resources and information.

When you join at this level, you become part of something bigger, and you help us give voice to the many issues heart patients face throughout their lifespan. You also learn about the many educational opportunities Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts provide. Finally, you join the nation's largest cardiovascular disease peer-to-peer support network and help us support even more people. Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts provide educational programs, peer-to-peer support programs, heart disease awareness campaigns, and we advocate for heart patients big and small every opportunity we can. We need your support to do this. To join Mended Hearts or Mended Little Hearts or renew your membership is easy and can be done online or through the mail.

To renew over the phone, please call 888-432-7899 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET. To renew through the mail, print off and fill out the membership form found in this newsletter. It can be mailed to the address for the Mended Hearts Resource Center found on the form.

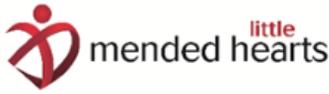
We have a variety of levels of membership for both individuals and families. Please review the attached membership for the membership levels. We appreciate the response from last month's request for joining and/or renewing your membership, so we are including the information in the rest of the 2020 newsletter issues. We really would like to see an increase in both our local chapter as well as the national chapter. An increase in membership is an increase in the number of individuals made aware of the benefits of being involved with Mended Hearts.

Mended Hearts is a national and community-based non-profit organization that has been offering the gift of hope to heart disease patients, their families and caregivers. To offer this hope Mended Hearts provides a variety of programs.

- Mended Hearts is the largest peer-to-peer heart patient support network in the world
- Mended Hearts has been offering hope and support for 69 years, providing more than 230,000 visits each year
- Mended Hearts provides education, support and hope to all types of heart patients and their families
- Mended Hearts and Mended Little Hearts has 265 chapters in North America, serving 460+ hospitals

***It's great to be alive and to help others.***

***\*Please note, our chapter has a local dues of \$10 per member. Please pay those directly to the chapter and mail to: MH 260, P O Box 18912, Huntsville, AL 35804-8912***



Mended Hearts, Inc. Resource Center  
 1500 Dawson Road  
 Albany, GA 31707  
 Phone: 1-888-HEART99 Email: info@mendedhearts.org

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

NEW MENDED HEARTS  NEW MENDED *LITTLE* HEARTS  RENEWAL DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Mr. /Mrs./Ms.) \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter/Group \_\_\_\_\_ Member-at-large \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City / ST / Zip \_\_\_\_\_ I want to be a MH support volunteer: Yes  No

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in CHD Parent Matching: Yes  No

(Please check all that apply) I am a Heart Patient  Caregiver  CHD Parent  Physician  RN  Healthcare Employee

**OPTIONAL INFO:** Race:  Caucasian  Black  Asian  Am. Indian  Hispanic  Other \_\_\_\_\_ Gender:  Male  Female

**Membership Levels:** All membership levels are for ONE YEAR, renewed annually, except for Heart of Gold Lifetime Sponsorship.

Please choose your membership level and complete any appropriate payment information below.

**INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP**

**\_\_\_\_ Associate Member --- FREE**

- \* Can attend any chapter meeting for MH or MLH
- \* Can join online communities
- \* Can access Member Portal
- \* Receives the National e-newsletter

**\_\_\_\_ Individual Member --- \$20 annual donation per person**

- \* All of the benefits of an Associate Member, PLUS
- \* Membership Card
- \* Car Decal – Select \_\_\_ MH or \_\_\_ MLH
- \* One-time 5% off coupon for purchase from the MH store
- \* One year annual subscription to Heartbeat magazine (\$30 value)

**\_\_\_\_ Bronze Member --- \$45 annual donation per person**

- \* All the benefits of a Full Individual Member, PLUS
- \* Membership Pin
- \* Choice of \_\_\_ Drawstring Backpack or \_\_\_ MH/MLH Notecards (10 pk)
- \* 5% off registration of any National (not regional) MH/MLH Conference or Symposia

**\_\_\_\_ Silver Member --- \$100 annual donation per person**

- \* All the benefits of a Bronze Member, PLUS
- \* A Stainless Steel Mended Hearts Travel Mug

**\_\_\_\_ Gold Member --- \$250 annual donation per person**

- \* All the benefits of a Silver Member, PLUS
- \* A Red Fleece Blanket
- \* 10% off registration of any National Conference or CHD Symposium

**\_\_\_\_ Heart of Gold Lifetime Sponsor --- \$1500 donation  
 A one-time donation per individual**

- \* All the benefits of a Gold member FOR LIFE, PLUS
- \* 15% off registration fees at National MH/MLH Conferences / Symposia
- \* Recognition in the next *Heartbeat* magazine after enrolling in the Heart of Gold Lifetime Sponsorship, in all special Heartbeat issues, and on our website's list of Heart of Gold Lifetime Sponsors

**FAMILY MEMBERSHIP**

For members of one household with one mailing address only

**\_\_\_\_ Family Membership --- \$40 annual donation**

- \* All of the benefits of an Associate Membership, PLUS
- \* One year annual subscription to Heartbeat magazine (\$30 value)
- \* Membership Cards for all members of the family
- \* 2 Car Decals – Select \_\_\_ MH or \_\_\_ MLH
- \* Each family member receives a one-time 5% off coupon for purchase from the MH store. Use only one coupon per order.

**\_\_\_\_ Bronze Family Membership --- \$75 annual donation**

- \* All the benefits of a Family Membership, PLUS
- \* One Membership Pin per member
- \* Choice of \_\_\_ Drawstring Backpack or \_\_\_ MH/MLH Notecards (10 pk)
- \* 5% off registration of any National (not regional) MH/MLH Conference or Symposia

Family Members:

\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_ Child \_\_\_ Heart Patient \_\_\_\_\_

Note: National memberships are tax deductible less \$10.  
 Lifetime sponsorships are 100% tax deductible.

**PAYMENT INFORMATION:**

Membership Level \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional tax-deductible Donation to  
 Mended Hearts  Mended *Little* Hearts \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Please make your check payable to **Mended Hearts, Inc.  
 1500 Dawson Road  
 Albany, GA 31707**

For Credit Card payments, call 1-888-432-7899 (1-888-HEART99)

***If chapter dues / donations apply, they are tax deductible. Please pay the chapter directly as shown here. Please DO NOT send chapter dues to the Resource Center.***

Chapter # 260 Annual Chapter Dues \$10.00

Additional Chapter Donation Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL Paid to Chapter \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Check payable to: MH 260  
 Mail to: P O Box 18912, Huntsville, AL 35804-8912**